

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AGR-20 FEA-02 CEA-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FRB-03 H-03 INR-11 INT-08 L-03

LAB-06 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 AID-20 CIEP-03

SS-20 STR-08 TAR-02 TRSE-00 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03

OMB-01 SWF-02 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 NEA-14 OIC-04 SAM-01

SAJ-01 DRC-01 /254 W

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R 240734Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

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INFO USMISSION GENEVA

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PASS AGRICULTURE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, FAO

SUBJECT: FAO-UNCTAD INTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS ON GRAIN OTHER THAN
WHEAT

1. GRAINS CONSULTATIONS, HELD PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION VVI OF
UNCTAD COMMITTEE ON COMMODITIES, OPENED SEPT. 19 AND
CONCLUDED SEPT. 20, ALTHOUGH ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR
THREE DAYS. NEARLY ALL PRINCIPAL EXPORTERS AND
IMPORTERS, INCLUDING USSR BUT NOT PRC, WERE REPRESENTED.
DELEGATES WERE LARGELY TECHNICALLY-ORIENTED REPRESENTATIVES
WHO HAD ATTENDED PRECEDING REGULAR MEETING OF FAO INTER-
GOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON GRAINS. CONCURRENT SESSION OF AD
HOC WORKING GROUP OF WFC PREPCOM BLED-OFF MORE POLITICALLY
MOTIVATED REPRESENTATIVES OF SEVERAL LDCS. CONSEQUENTLY,
CONSULTATIONS WERE SHORTER, QUIETER AND LESS CONTENTIOUS

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THAN MIGHT OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN THE CASE.

2. SUBSTANTIVE AGENDA ITEMS FOCUSSED ON FAO DOCUMENT SURVEYING TRADE LIBERALIZATION AND PRICING PROBLEMS AFFECTING GRAINS, PARTICULARLY ON TEN DRAFT PROPOSALS. DOCUMENT ON MARKET STABILIZATION FOR COARSE GRAINS, SUBMITTED AT OPENING SESSION OF CONSULTATIONS BY UNCTAD SECRETARIAT, WAS CRITICIZED FOR BEING LATE AND SUPERFICIAL AND RECEIVED ONLY PERFUNCTORY CONSIDERATION.

3. DESULTORY DISCUSSION OF FAO DRAFT PROPOSALS CONCLUDED FIRST DAY. HOWEVER, ON SECOND DAY, NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS (ESPECIALLY THOSE FROM DCS) COMMENTED IN MORE DETAIL AND NOTED THAT ANY LACK OF SPECIFIC COMMENT SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS ENDORSEMENT OR ACCEPTANCE.

4. PROPOSALS CAN BE GROUPED UNDER THREE HEADINGS:

A. TRADE LIBERALIZATION AND PREFERENTIAL MARKET ACCESS FOR LDCS: ARGENTINA WAS ONLY LDC PRESENT HAVING IMMEDIATE INTEREST. IRAQ ARGUED THAT LACK OF LDC EXPORT POTENTIAL WAS EVIDENCE OF NEED FOR GREATER DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER DONORS. DOMINANT THEME, HOWEVER, WAS THAT ACCESS TO SUPPLY WAS CURRENTLY MORE IMPORTANT THAN ACCESS TO MARKETS AND THAT TRADE LIBERALIZATION GENERALLY WAS SUBJECT FOR NEGOTIATION IN MTN.

B. PRICE STABILIZATION AND BUFFER STOCKS: THESE WAS GENERAL INTEREST IN PRINCIPLE OF STOCKPILING, BUT DIVERGENCE OF VIEWS ON OBJECTIVES AS AMONG EMERGENCY FOOD AID, SECURITY OF SUPPLY, AND BUFFER STOCKS FOR PRICE STABILIZATION. BUFFER STOCK CONCEPT FOUND LEAST FAVOR, WITH EVEN FRANCE AMBIVALENT. US DEL NOTED CONFLICT BETWEEN PRICE STABILIZATION AND PROVIDING FOR WORLD FOOD SECURITY. GENERAL INCLINATION WAS TO LEAVE THIS SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION IN WORLD FOOD CONFERENCE AND MTN.

C. REBATE OF IMPORT LEVIES AND DUTIES TO LDC EXPORTERS: SEVERAL DC DELEGATIONS NOTED THAT IMPORT DUTIES EITHER HAD BEEN ABOLISHED OR WERE TOO LOW TO IMPEDE TRADE. EC AND FRANCE ARGUED AGAINST REBATE OF LEVIES AS LIKELY TO BE INEFFECTIVE IN ASSISTING GRAIN GROWERS AND AS LINKED TO LARGER POLICY ISSUES. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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5. REPORT OF CONSULTATIONS ADOPTED WITH MINIMUM OF DIFFICULTY. REPORT WILL BE DISTRIBUTED SIMULTANEOUSLY TO GOVERNMENTS DIRECTLY AS WELL AS THROUGH FAO AND UNCTAD.

6. COMPLETION OF DELEGATION REPORT WILL BE DELAYED SEVERAL WEEKS PENDING RETURN OF DELEGATION MEMBERS TO WASHINGTON BUT WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. END

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